

Ethical Ethnography

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We're all lovely, ethical people

... but it's easy to mis-step.

we can't see everything coming -
expect ethical dilemmas

Who are we responsible to?

- the research participants?
- the community?
- our academic field?
- the public?

What's our responsibility to the people who participate in our research?

- protection from harm?
- complete honesty?
- making good use of what they give us?
- benefit?
- credit?
- co-authorship?

What are we trying to do?

- get spontaneous speech from a wide variety of speakers in all kinds of situations.
- learn all kinds of personal stuff about the speakers.
- analyze our linguistic data in light of this stuff.
- publish it.

- How can we do this without betraying the speakers?

Four principles

- Consent
 - do people know who you are and what you're doing?
 - is it easy for them to choose not to participate?
 - do people know what they're signing up for?
- Privacy
 - are you respecting people's desire for privacy?
 - are you putting people at psychological, social, physical or political risk?
- Respect
 - are you treating people with respect both in the field and in the presentation of your research?
- Justice
 - who's bearing the burden, who's getting the benefits?
 - what kinds of public discourses is your research feeding into?

at the same time ...

where does care end and paternalism begin?

when are you (or the IRB) making other
people's decisions?

Examples from research with kids

- a particularly at-risk group in research.
- Bottom line questions:
 - how old do you have to be to be able to give informed consent?
 - who are you protecting - kids or their parents' right to control?

negotiating ground rules



A few ethical choice moments

- a girl tells you she had unprotected sex.
- a boy tells you he's going to run away from home.
- a girl makes a racist remark in a group.
- a teacher asks you if you saw an incident that some kid reported to her.

You as a risk

- you're taken for a social worker.
- you provide a venue for people to say indiscrete things.
- you become a commodity.
- people come to depend on you, and you leave.

Who are you
seeing/noticing/talking to?

Are you reproducing

- hierarchy
- invisibility
- stigma
- exclusion

Ethics in reporting results

- what do you really need to write/say?
- do your participants know where and how you're going to play/show/write about the data?
- engaging your audience vs. exoticizing your participants.
- do you have the chance to benefit your participants with your writing?

the consent “process”

Note: Bolded elements must be included in your consent form

**Nonmedical Human Participants
Consent Form**

STUDY TITLE:

Protocol Director: (Only protocol directors or faculty sponsors whose names appear in the Personnel Info section of the eProtocol application may be listed here).

DESCRIPTION: You are invited to participate in a **research study** on **(describe project in non-technical language; include types of questions that will be asked, if applicable; explain purpose of the research)**. You will be asked to **(describe procedures; mention video/audio taping, if applicable, and what will become of tapes after use, e.g., shown at scientific meetings; describe the final disposition of the tapes)**.

(If applicable) An interpreter will be used in this study (describe: 1. how you will guarantee that the bilingual interpreter will maintain the confidentiality of the subjects, 2. who the interpreter works for, and 3. how the interpreter was recruited for your study).

RISKS AND BENEFITS: The risks associated with this study are **(describe foreseeable risks or discomfort to subjects; if none, state as such)**. The benefits which may reasonably be expected to result from this study are **(describe any benefits; if none, state as such)**. **We cannot and do not guarantee or promise that you will receive any benefits from this study.** *(If applicable)* Your decision whether or not to participate in this study will not affect your employment/medical care/grades in school.

TIME INVOLVEMENT: Your participation in this experiment will take approximately **(amount of time)**.

PAYMENTS: You will receive **(describe reimbursement; where there is none, state as such)** as payment for your participation.

SUBJECT'S RIGHTS: **If you have read this form and have decided to participate in this project, please understand your participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. (If applicable: If you agree, your identity will be made known in all written data resulting from the study. Otherwise,) Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.**

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Contact information should include the following as appropriate. Starred () paragraphs are required verbatim, except as noted below:*

*Questions, Concerns, or Complaints: If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this **research study**, its procedures, risks and benefits, you should ask the Protocol Director, *(name and phone number of Protocol Director)*.

*Independent Contact: If you are not satisfied with how this study is being conducted, or if you have any concerns, complaints, or general questions about the research or your rights as a participant, please contact the Stanford Institutional Review Board (IRB) to speak to someone independent of the research team at (650)-723-2480 or toll free at

1-866-680-2906. You can also write to the Stanford IRB, Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305-5401.

(If applicable) Appointment Contact: If you need to change your appointment, please contact *(name)* at *(phone number)*.

(If applicable) Alternate Contact: If you cannot reach the Protocol Director, please contact the research team at *(contact name and phone number)*.

(If applicable) I give consent to be audiotaped during this study:

please initial: Yes No

(If applicable) I give consent to be videotaped during this study:

please initial: Yes No

(If applicable) I give consent for tapes resulting from this study to be used for (describe proposed use of tapes):

please initial: Yes No

(If applicable) I give consent my identity to be revealed in all written data resulting from this study

please initial: Yes No

The extra copy of this consent form is for you to keep.

SIGNATURE _____ **DATE** _____

Protocol Approval Date: _____

Protocol Expiration Date: _____

Be a human subjects activist!

- Push back on the IRB
 - Know the federal regulations
- Volunteer for the IRB
 - and once on, push.

A few resources

AAA Ethics Site:

<http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/ethics.htm>

Office for Human Research Protections (US
Dept. of Health and Human Services):

<http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/>

The Belmont Report:

[http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/
belmont.htm](http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/belmont.htm)